

*Twice a Month!*



# **messing about in BOATS**

*Volume 9 - Number 16*

*January 1, 1992*







messing  
about in

## BOATS

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Publisher & Editor, Bob Hicks

## Our Next Issue...

Will have several "on-the-water" tales, even yet. Jim Lacey tells us what it's like sailing on Mystic Seaport's schooner "Brilliant"; Forrest Dillon reports on an attempted kayak circumnavigation of Mt. Desert Island to raise funds for a charity; and I provide a few photos and comments on season's end on the Sudbury River. Hugh Ware will bring us some more tugboat news; Dave Mainwaring muses about maritime museums and ship modeling; and I'll review Garret Conover's book "Beyond the Paddle". On the design and building scene we'll have Steve Hansen's Bolger "Pirogue" and John Summers' John Bull "Little Pete" projects, and appropriate to the season, Richard SantaColoma tells us about "Project Icester". We'll also hear from Nelson Silva who's busy building Sea Skiffs in his Wilmington, North Carolina shop..

## On the Cover...

The Great Auk arrives on Buzzards Bay, as marathon paddler Dick Wheeler completes his 1,500 mile trip from Newfoundland to Massachusetts in his sea kayak, retracing the migration route of the extinct seabird, the great auk. His arrival is chronicled in this issue.

# COMMENTARY

BY GARD CALLANEN, INDIAN POINT GUIDEBOAT CO., MIDLAND, PA

## THE TROUBLE WITH SMALL BOAT SHOWS

At the Albany, New York, Wooden Boat Festival last June I was asked as an exhibitor if I thought the show was successful; my reply was, "no". This summer I also attended other shows in different states, the results were basically the same.

My negative reply was in no way a criticism of the Albany group's efforts. They were hobbled by many factors beyond their control, with the present state of the economy being the largest handicap.

I was asked in their post-show survey if I had any direct sales from the show. I did not, but I went there expecting none. Show results are subjective. Without any immediate results, you think it was waste of time. But then at a later date a customer shows up who saw your boats a year ago at a show. I view a show as an advertising medium, and any direct sales I regard as a bonus.

Albany had several problems, none of which I can blame on the organizers. The rock music concert on the site does not attract a customer base interested in small boats. The bands were so loud that at times it was virtually impossible to talk to a prospect without having to go to another part of the site to converse. The city's vehicle parking rules angered me and most other exhibitors. It is very difficult to effectively exhibit your products when your support vehicle is a half-mile away.

Having a large number of people view your product is excellent ONLY if they are interested in what you are offering. A large walk-in crowd due to free public admission to the park is a detriment when their interest is in wondering what you are doing with these boats alongside a riverfront exercise path. Time was needlessly spent explaining why we were there and advertising dollars were wasted handing out literature that made it only as far as the nearest trash can. Reaching the proper customer base is the vital part of any advertising effort.

The other shows I attended this past summer were shows only for boats. The attendance was small in all cases, but at least the people who visited them were there to look at and talk about the boats. In each instance, excuses were made by the organizers for these small turnouts. The bottom line seems to be the state of the economy, many people are affected by it and are unwilling or unable to spend money

on non-essential items.

The problems of the smaller boat builders are the end result of the trickle down economy. Until things change for the better we, the small volume boat builders, are going to have to stand tough. When things do change we can then be ready to enjoy the resurgence that supposedly started last summer but soon was squelched.

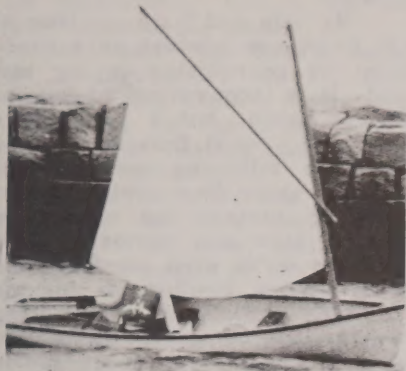
Advertising is necessary in today's business environment. I have heard the remark, "When times are good, advertise. When times are tough, advertise more!" These shows are necessary and can be enjoyable. But they have to be held in such a way as to benefit the exhibitors in the best possible way. The right market, the right time, the right location.

Albany, on the river, is an excellent location for my products as it is close to a large part of my customer base. Having the show earlier in the year is a good idea, having it in conjunction with a rock concert is not. I could not attend the show later at Keuka, New York. The show at Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was also poorly attended. Only about half the exhibitors showed up, and the attendance was in the hundreds rather than thousands. The hot weather was blamed for this poorer turnout but I believe they were the victim of the same circumstances Albany encountered.

I think the attitude of many builders right now is, "what am I doing wrong?". I also believe that it is not we who are wrong, but rather the inaction of an inept government which has caused this recession, making we individuals pay the price. I feel that when the economy does straighten out, the boat shows, the builders, and the interested public will once again enjoy this sort of gathering that will benefit all.

I have been involved in various events that required the time and commitment necessary to effect the type of shows that were organized this past summer and I know the amount of work involved and the little appreciation shown by the people directly catered to. The several show organizers this past year are to be commended for their efforts at arranging these events. It's a thankless job and I'm sure that they wonder if it was worth all the sweat. If by my encouragement I can persuade them to do it again, please do so. We the builders need these shows. They are the only way to reach numerous people on a one-on-one, hands-on manner.





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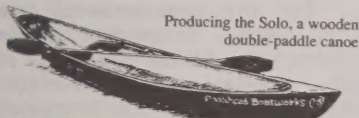
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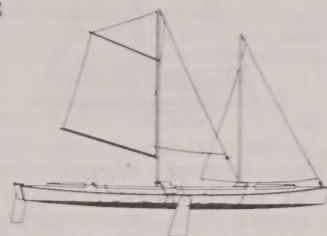
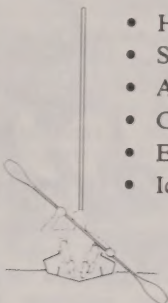
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## Your Commentary

### THE FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL YACHT CLUB

I congratulate Seattle, Washington, for its first all-student public school yacht club in the northwest, as described in the October 15th issue "Your Commentary" by Dick Wagner. But the possibility of it being the first in the nation will not hold true. In the fall of 1943, my 8th grade homeroom in Roslyn High School, Roslyn Heights, New York, organized itself into the Roslyn Harbor Junior Yacht Club. It remained in existence for 19 years, finally giving way to other activities.

We had the usual commodores and other flag officers, but also added a student council representative. I still have a burgee that hung on the wall, and pleasant memories of long since dispersed students who turned their 30th and 40th class reunions into nostalgia trips about "our yacht club".

Over the years we built four plywood prams and a 12' rowboat in the classrooms, pushing back the desks and chairs for the after school projects. We often had beach parties, hauling the boats on a trailer that some of the boys had built as part of the activities. We visited area yacht clubs, and sometimes were caretakers for neighbors' boats, storing them in garages and using some of them as meeting places for our regular Friday after school meetings.

I have been retired from teaching for over 14 years but "my kids" still keep in touch, remembering the R.H.J.Y.C. that they started and passed on to many others who followed for their introduction to the pleasures of messing about in boats. Today I'm still involved, now with the Sea Cliff Sailing Club for local kids.

Ward Bell, 372 Sea Cliff Ave.,  
Sea Cliff, NY 11579.

### LOOKING FOR MORE PLEASING ROWING

My wife and I like to take our 13' fiberglass rowboat as a tender when we go cruising in our sailboat. It is inconvenient to tow, being so large, but I have rigged things to keep it from ramming our stern in following seas. We get great pleasure from rowing it many miles in harbors and rivers, exploring from our moored sailboat. At times we've even overtaken other yachtsmen heading for the pier in small inflatables with noisy, smelly little outboards. We particularly enjoyed rowing about in Hadley's Harbor, even against the current under bridges there.

Our present boat is not bad looking, I purchased it about ten years ago from Pete's Plastic Boats in Brooklin, Maine, and it has served us well. It was made off an old Maine rowboat and shows the lines of the planking, which give it a sort of crude charm. It's worst performance characteristic, however, is that it won't track. When you stop rowing, it invariably turns one way or another. Even in a mild cross wind I have to row almost entirely with one oar to maintain my chosen course.

I am hoping to find a better designed boat of wood or fiberglass of similar size that will have more pleasing rowing characteristics. I welcome any suggestions from readers, builders or dealers.

Charles Lowell, 323 Garfield Rd., Concord, MA 01742, (508) 369-1157.

### STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM NEEDED

For the past several years I have been volunteering in a Wilmington (DE) Vo-Tech school with special education students building boats, and in organizing a "River Rangers" group of students dedicated to environmental study and testing of the waters of our local rivers. This program has been so successful that the school principal is now interested in establishing an environmental curriculum. I would like to hear of any such courses of study at the high school level as guides for this planned course.

Tom Colgan, 2304 Cherry Ln.,  
Arden, DE 19810, (302) 475-7061.

### CONTACTS DESIRED

I've gotten interested in working model sailboats and would like to contact others of similar interest. I am also interested in making my full size cabin sailboat available to the physically handicapped or elderly and would appreciate any response to this proposal. Both interests were kicked off by things I read in "Boats".

Iver Lofving, P.O. Box 366,  
Swan's Island, ME 04685.



## BUSINESS AIN'T SO BAD HERE

My recent calls and visiting with boatbuilding friends has revealed encouraging news.

Faut Latif has had a better than average year, his St. Lawrence skiff has found a happy home at last and he has orders for a bunch of Wee Lassies and even an Adirondack guideboat.

Dan Sutherland's new shop over in Penn Yan has at least twenty boats in it for work, and he has orders for a couple of new boats to build as well. He's pretty happy with how things are going.

Howie Mittleman of North River Boatworks said that the boatbuilding workshop they ran last fall was successful and they'll be doing more this winter, and they have an order for one of their St. Lawrence skiffs, a sailing model, along with another for one of their North River skiffs.

It does appear that these classic small boat builders are chugging along and not ready to float belly up yet. Of course, I'm still turning out my guideboat models as fast as I can (which is not too fast), and feeling guilty for not expanding my offerings to include other small boats like the sneakbox, lapstrake canoes, St. Lawrence shiff, etc.

Dave Kavner, Pisces Paddles, HCR 1, Box 75A, Keene, NY 12942-9707.

## PERFECT OARS & PICKS & PANS

I just completed building the Bolger canoe that appeared in "Boats" recently (Sept. 15). I have also recently completed the Bolger/Payson "Gypsy", which I named "Perfect Intentions", as my desire for craftsmanship far exceeded my ability to achieve it. A great little daysailer, but I have yet to row her because I cannot bring myself to "buy" oars when I was able to build the boat. Where can I get some oar instruction?

I ordered "Baidarka" after reading your review of it in "Boats", June 15, 1991). It is a great book I never would have found without your advice. Perhaps you could print a listing of all the books you have reviewed, something like, "Bob's Picks & Pans", with your recommendations from "loved it" to "hated it".

Peter Dallman, Fountain Valley, CA.

ED NOTE. John DeLapp had a comprehensive article on building oars in the Traditional Small Craft Association journal, "Ash Breeze", Winter, 1990. Copies are available from the TSCA, 3720 Ocean Ave., Seaford, NY 11783 for \$3. I only review books that I like, so a "Picks & Pans" would not work. If a book hasn't grabbed me by page 50, I stop right there, there's not enough time to waste on dull reading.

## I WAS ONLY GONNA LOOK!

Last spring I went to a used boat show in Annapolis, totally determined to look only. But I met this rather eccentric small man at the entrance who had a little wooden boat, peculiar and cheap. Well, as you can imagine, I am now terminally infected with "WBS" ("Wooden Boat Syndrome"), which I am told is expensive, time consuming and delusional.

But as I started to dig out the black wood around the centerboard trunk I realized I knew nothing of this craft except that it was called a "San Francisco Bay Pelican". As fate would have it, in the process of working with an expert wooden boat craftsman near Annapolis, Rob McCallum, I mentioned my ignorance and he mentioned that a recent issue of "Boats" had something about this boat. I greatly appreciated this lead and have written to the people who have the plans to learn more about what I have.

Jay Hawley, College Park, MD.

## VERY DISAPPOINTED

I must admit to having been very disappointed when you finally published the article that I had been waiting for so long about the "Great Pelican" and its variations. There was hardly anything there, and no real information about the latest "Pelican" variation. I hope that someone will write a "Pelican" article somewhere along the line that will be more informative, and that you will publish it.

Tom Grimes, Muncie, IN.

ED. NOTE. We published what we received from Muriel Short, and sent Tom copies of several earlier "Pelican" articles we've done since 1984.

## TEXAS MESSABOUT

There seems to be an increasing interest in small inexpensive boats here on the Texas Gulf coast. I'd like to get a small boat "messabout" organized here next March or April in the Galveston area if there's enough interest. I invite response from interested readers.

Chris Berg, 6916 Ave. E, Santa Fe, TX 77510, (409) 943-2756 work, (409) 925-1377 home.

## LIKES IT AS IT IS

There seems to have cropped up some suggestions about picking up the pieces after the demise of "Small Boat Journal". I like your magazine just as it is, you've done great, and that's why so many of us hang onto the mailbox waiting for the next issue of "Boats". There are plenty of books and other journals available with the information that WAS in "SBJ". "Boats" is a good example of "not growing bigger is better". Please don't change and go commercial.

Charlie Von Hagel, Bel Air, MD.

## Paddle Baja!

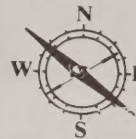
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Dick Wheeler's Great Auk Project's "on the water" portion came to a conclusion on a November Saturday at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy at the western end of the Cape Cod Canal when Dick came ashore for the last time from his heavily loaded sea kayak to conclude a 1,500 mile odyssey that began last July on Funk Island, 35 miles off the northeast coast of Newfoundland. Over these four months Wheeler has endured some demanding conditions at sea and made some enduring personal contacts with hundreds of supportive people ashore along most of his route.

Wheeler's larger purpose was to use this retracing of the migratory route of the extinct flightless sea bird, the great auk, as a metaphor to illustrate his concern over our continued decimation of the world's population of wildlife. To this end he had raised about \$250,000 to fund the trip and its filming for a public TV documentary for national broadcasting. He also had established connections with various environmental groups sharing concern for what we are



## The Great Auk Arrives

doing to our coastal environment, providing these with a dramatic "point man" to gain further public attention.

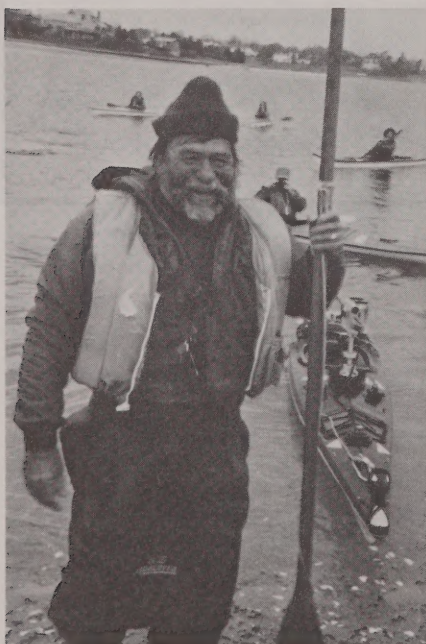
His "official" arrival at Buzzards Bay was arranged by Mimi McConnell, executive director of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, and also amongst those greeting him was the director of the Student Ocean Challenge, Mame Reynolds, who had distributed weekly reports from Dick to hundreds of participating schools, and had with her several marvelous scrapbooks compiled of the letters, drawings and reports from participating school children to be presented to Dick. Dick strongly feels it is most effective to educate the young environmentally, much more so than trying to change the entrenched attitudes of the adult population.

Top of page: Journey's end on the beach at Buzzards Bay. Left below: It feels good to be here, Wheeler was in good shape after his four month odyssey. Right below: Dick and his wife Sandra talk to reporters.

Dick's more personal purpose was to continue packing action into a life already overflowing with action, even though he is approaching retirement age. At 62, Wheeler is incredibly fit and when you read the details of some of the situations he had to deal with off the intimidating coast of Newfoundland, alone in his kayak, you realize what he's after for himself. He's intensely aware of his own mortality, and still has adventures he wishes to enjoy before it's all over. Yet he's no daredevil, a favored comment of his about how he makes some of his decisions in the most demanding circumstances is, "I'd rather be a live chicken." Well, he's very much alive, but certainly no chicken by any standard I can visualize.

Later on this winter we plan to bring you an in-depth report on Dick's adventure, focussing of course on its small boat aspects. Dick says he has a publisher for a book, and of course the New Film Company was filming for a public tv program. But these will come later, and in the meantime I think that small boat people will find Dick's detailed discussions of what he experienced fascinating and inspiring. We'll be bringing this to you after we've had a chance to spend some time with Dick learning all about it.

Bob Hicks





## JUST A TASTE

Herewith an excerpt from Dick's journal as published in the weekly report from the Student Ocean Challenge, how the trip began:

"July 13, 1991: We left Valleyfield at 7:30 a.m. in the fishing vessel "Lee Darrell", a 51' longliner captained by Skipper Bill Sturge, with a crew of three. The Sturge family came from the west of England 300 years ago and have been fishing ever since. They are also gatekeepers for Funk Island, where the great auks annually nested. The passengers include a scientist, author, and film crew. Much filming. We see many birds; murrelets mostly, but also gannets, kittiwakes, fulmars, razor bills, and herring gulls.

We anchor near Funk Island for the night. The weather worsens. It is not possible to get the camera crew onto Funk Island to film my departure in my kayak. Do I make the paddle? It's up to me. If we go, the worst case scenario is that I capsize and they fish me out. If we abort, we might never make it back. The weather is always dicey out at Funk. I have chartered the "Lee Darrell" with the understanding that if the fish come, they go. The film crew has only five days here.

Day 1, July 14, 1991: So I go. I make only 2.5 knots the first two hours. The wind increases as the day goes on. Everyone on the "Lee Darrell" is very seasick all day, but I'm too busy and scared. It's too rough for me to take off the spray cover. There's water over me constantly. They pass me my Shaklee food every 30 minutes to keep me from cramping. After eight hours I'm only halfway. There's no land in sight and the weather's not nice. I decide to keep on going. At dusk I sight land and we keep on. It's the hardest paddle of my life, 17 hours. We arrive at Lunsden at 12:30 a.m. I have to be lifted from the boat as I can't walk. My feet and legs have been "asleep" for six or seven hours. I go into hypothermia but hot tea with molasses cures that. Quite a crowd of on-lookers, fishermen and their families. After a hot bath, I eat some real food and a make a phone call to my wife Sandra, then I go to bed in a real bed at 3:00 a.m."

Wheeler's tenacity of purpose on this initial 31 mile open ocean crossing did not go unnoticed by the Newfoundland fishermen, and the word soon spread along the coast about "that man". For the rest of his trip along that forbidding coast Dick was overwhelmed with generous welcomes and support.

(Readers wishing to learn more about the Student Ocean Challenge, "An Adventure in Creative Learning", can inquire of them at P.O. Box 631, Jamestown, RI 02835, (401) 423-3535.)



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# The Baker

I like canoeing. Hiking along riverbanks makes me happy. Viewing fall foliage is pleasurable. Eating a great lunch al fresco is memorable. Being with old friends and making new ones is fun. When I have the opportunity to combine all of these favorite experiences in the same outing, I enjoy every moment. An early October Saturday was such an occasion when I joined Bill Zeller's and Anne Perry's Country Canoeist outfit for a twelve mile paddle on New Hampshire's Baker River.

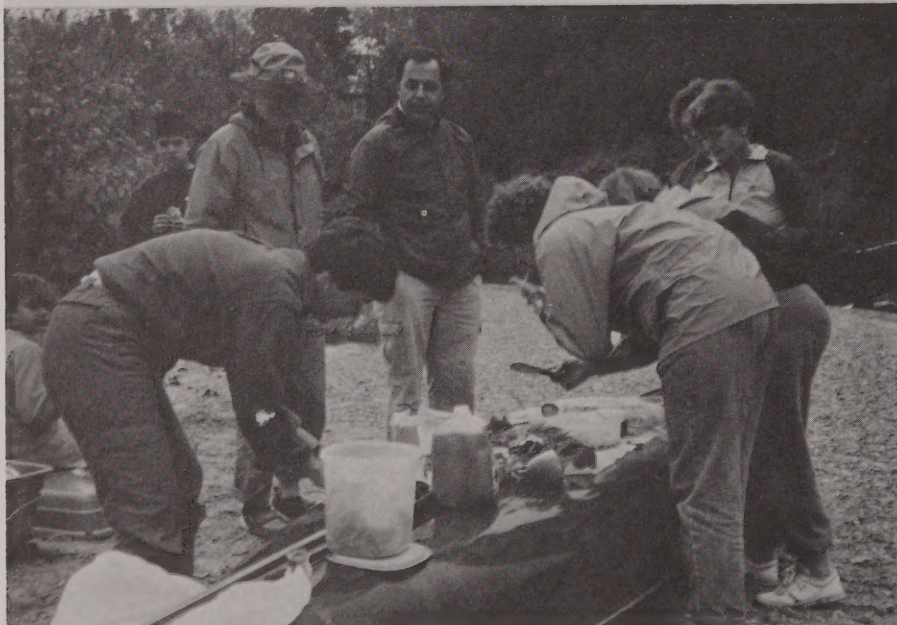
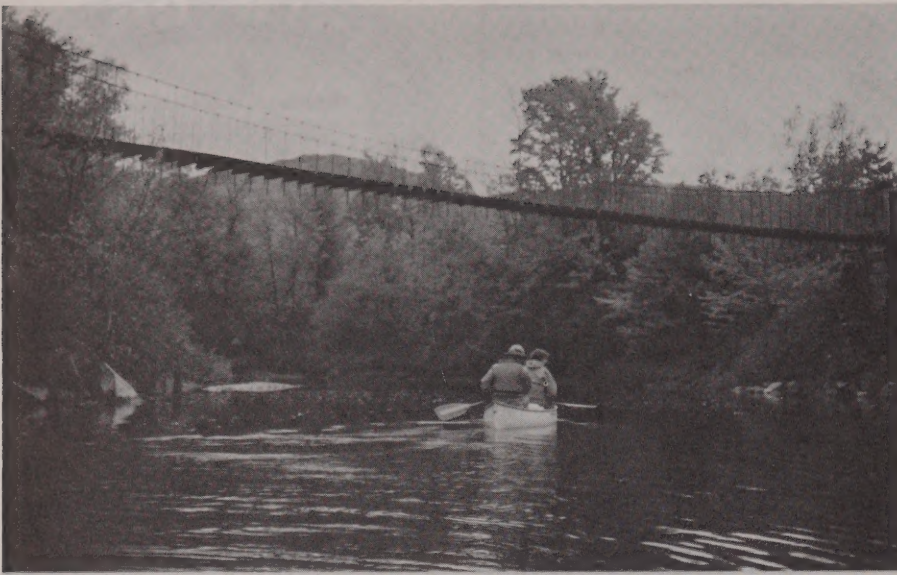
The lucky thirteen in our party paddled the entire route with nary a dump. We were a mixed group, from ten to sixty years of age, from first time paddlers to veterans of Arctic expeditions. But each was intent on having a great time. We were not disappointed. The scenery was superb with spectacular foliage, distant mountains, rock cliff faces, cutbanks, and minor rapids here and there as the shallow, sandy bottomed river swung back and forth, with even a covered bridge to mark our take-out. The essence of rural New England was all splendidly there on an autumn day, even down to the mouldy scent of dank leaves.

In 1712 Lieutenant Thomas Baker and his men made the first descent of this river on a military expedition. The river was named for him. Long before Baker's party came along, Indians and unlettered trappers utilized this water trail linking the Connecticut and Merrimack Rivers. Baker had come to the right place.

Despite a nearby highway, rural roads, railroad tracks (complete with a high bridge) and an occasional farmhouse, the river meandered through unspoiled countryside. On one occasion, grazing Hereford cattle looked down upon us as we passed below. Toppled trees from undercut bankings created potential strainers, dangerous had the river been higher and more boisterous. Although the sun had been predicted for noon, the day remained overcast with late in the afternoon a hint of drizzle in the air.

While the river was so shallow that much of the time paddles would dig into sandy bottom, Bill made sure his new paddlers were not exposed to any possible dangers. All wore PFD's and when one modest rapid (Class 1/2 perhaps) had to be run, Bill hiked upstream to guide one inexperienced crew in their run down the riffles.

Lunch time on a riverside sandbank found Anne at work laying out the sumptuous repast on an upturned canoe hull, while a paddle became a cutting board for slicing.



On the Baker River: An interesting looking pedestrian suspension bridge out in the country; Coming ashore on a gravel bar. Gourmet lunch on an overturned canoe.



# River Bunch

ing up the ripe tomatoes. All the cold cuts and veggies were supplemented by Anne's home cooked chocolate chip, walnut and coconut cookies. Bill meanwhile heated up his canoeist's secret concoction, a pumpkin soup prepared with chicken stock and many spices, on a tiny backpacker stove.

Perhaps the highlight of exploration of the riverbanks came at a cemetery high on a sandy bluff that had been undercut back far enough that it was about to topple old gravestones into the river. Some of us hiked up the nearby less steep embankment to investigate, and one father was unable to pass up the pre-Halloween opportunity, stating loudly for the benefit of his young daughter, "Look look, there's a hand reaching up out of that hole!" She ran over to see and then chided Dad for the prank designed to frighten her. From all appearances another spring might cause a further collapse of the banking and some of the graves now at the brink would be doomed.

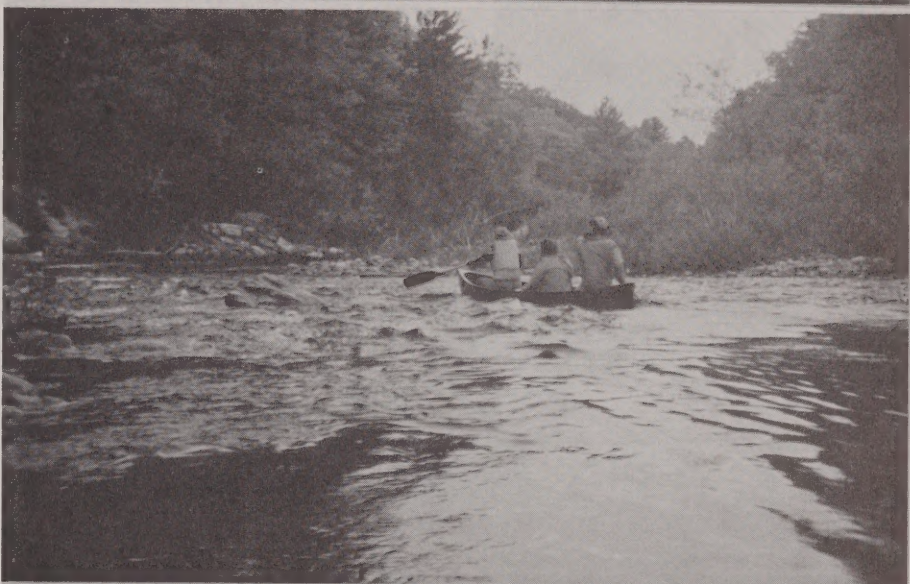
"If that's the Smith Road covered bridge, we're home," was the comment late in the afternoon. At the takeout, made up a very steep banking path beside the bridge abutment, one youth along with us entertained those of us awaiting the return of the carpool drivers with our vehicles, by swinging Tarzan-like from a rope he found suspended from the bridge girders. He had been an all-day paddler of some strength if not finesse, and had plenty left over at trips end.

One solo woman paddler using one of Bill's river kayaks had left her workaholic husband at home with paperwork he hadn't completed at the office. She had enjoyed the freedom of guiding her own boat. "You have to set aside a day for a trip like this and let nothing interfere with it," I remarked to her. "And what can be more rewarding than time spent canoeing?"

The end of every canoe trip I take is always tinged for me with a bit of sadness, even more strongly felt at what is obviously the last outing of the season. A few may paddle off in different directions, never to meet up again with others from today's group. But hopefully many of us will rendezvous again next fall to glide again down this beautiful river bordered by golden fall foliage.

Dick Winslow, Portsmouth, NH

(For a brochure detailing the 1992 season of canoe and kayak outings and training programs presented by Country Canoeists, write to them at 5 Surrey Ln., Merri-mack, NH 03054, or call (603) 429-1517.)



Bill Zeller (in rear) organizes these trips as part of his Country Canoeist business. Running the "rapids", this is what is called "quick water". The cemetery embankment, anyone see that hand sticking out?



# Building the Moth...

Readers who may recall the article in the September 1st issue about my discovering the Moth sailing dinghy may have been interested in the simple building technique briefly illustrated in that article. Well, I'll say right off that using plywood instead of the strip planking would have been easier, faster and cheaper, but not nearly as pretty as it turned out.

There are a few stages in building this Dorr Willey type Moth that I will attempt to explain so the process will be inviting and easier for other builders.

The first step was obtaining the plans and building materials. The plans were purchased from the Museum of the Albemarle (Hwy 17 S., Elizabeth City, NC 27909) and a materials list made up. This list included:

3/16" thick juniper strips cut from 5/4" stock.

3/8" thick frames cut from 5/4" stock.

1/4" marine or exterior grade plywood for frame reinforcement and a bulkhead.

5/4"x4"x12' piece of mahogany for the keel.

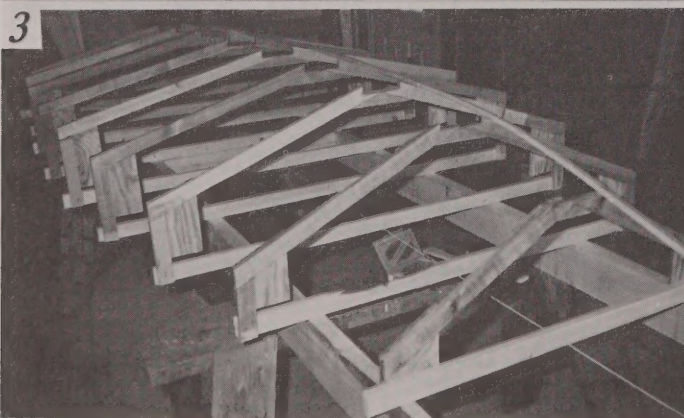
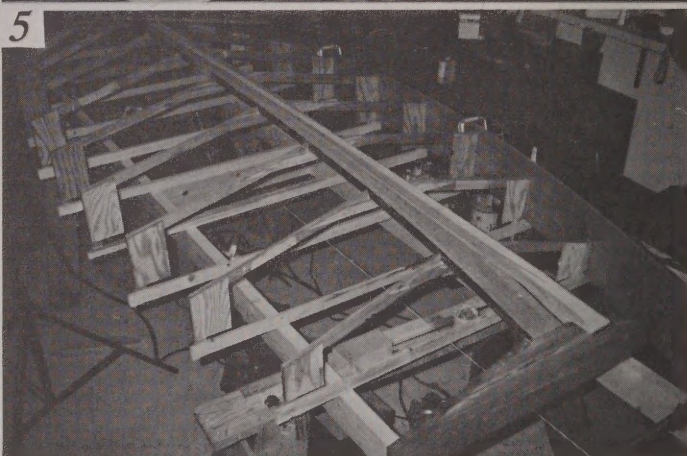
3/4"x6"x8' piece of mahogany for the transom.

Miscellaneous chunks of juniper for the nose block.

3/4"x6"x8' piece of juniper for the centerboard trunk.

West system epoxy.

Most of these supplies were found in and around Norfolk, Virginia, yet the best juniper I found was from John England (HCR Box 337, Urbanna, VA 23175, (804) 758-2721). This I used mainly for the deck. Next I lifted the measurements for the frames from the plans onto a piece of plywood (Photo #1). Construction was started by assembling each frame separately, which required an hour each (Photo #2). Once these were all assembled, the ribs were then arranged in order on the building jig (Photo #2)





### Classic Moth boat

Original Design, Captain Van Sant  
1930, Elizabeth City, NC

#### Development class

Builders are encouraged to use  
own ideas and methods

#### Weight

75lbs min

#### Length

Originally called the 11' class

#### Sail sq feet

72

\*\*\*\*\*This Classic Moth\*\*\*\*\*  
Tomahawk

Design Type, Dorr Willey

Builder, Scott Wolff

Materials, Juniper & West Epoxy

Weight, 106lbs

Sail, Cambridge Sail Loft

#### Plans

Museum of the Albemarle  
Highway 17 south  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

#### Class Contact

Erky or Alma Gregory  
904 Riverside Ave  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

and tacked standing with battens (Photo #3).

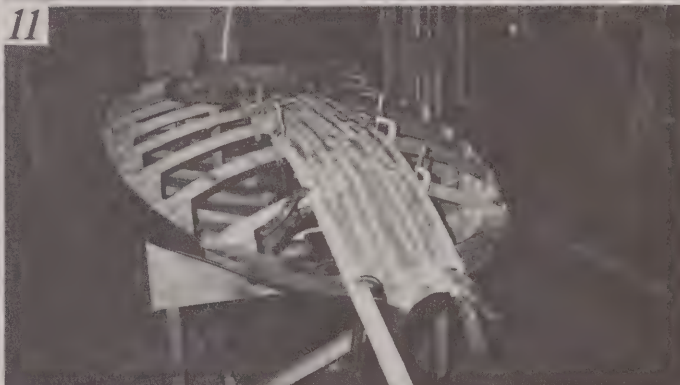
Next the nose block had to be made from laminated pieces of juniper and shaped roughly with a disc sander. This proved to be somewhat difficult because the plans did not indicate shape or assembly (Photo #4). This is the part of the construction that is left up to the builder's imagination.

The keel was laid with three 3/8"x4" pieces of mahogany laminated together and tied into the stem and transom (Photo #5). Planking was then started, and proved to be time consuming for my garage was too cool for using epoxy, so only one or two of the bottom strips were laid each day (Photo #6). This is the part that should have been done in marine plywood, which would have been faster to build and more durable. The sides of 3/8" juniper were then glued into place; the bottom smoothed with the sander, saturated

with West epoxy, and painted with enamel (Photo #7).

After a cradle was built, the boat was flipped over (Photo #8), and the mast step, centerboard trunk and rear bulkhead were installed. The deck beams (Photo #9) were a mystery to me until I called Enno Reckendorf at the Norfolk School of Boatbuilding and started asking questions. He explained to me the shop method of setting deck camber and then continued to be a valuable source of advice throughout the remainder of the project.

With the deck beams installed, I next cut out and reinforced the cockpit (Photo #10) and varnished the interior while accessible. The planking of the deck went a little faster due to the warmer weather in March (Photo #11). The final stage was making the coaming which was difficult, but made a bit easier with the use of masonite patterns, and then it was varnish time (Photo #12).







## ...then off to the Races

Pete Overman Photos

The big event for my new Moth would be the Classic Moth Boat Regatta in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. This 3rd annual event attracted seventeen boats from all over the east coast. Elizabeth City, long considered the birthplace of the Moth, was decorated with blue "Home of the Moth" banners on light posts and sported a recently dedicated Moth Park at one end of Main St.

A Moth is considered a "Classic Moth" if it has the lines of a pre-'60's design without wings or hiking boards. It also must have the lower aspect ratio rig of 72 sq. ft. and weigh at least 75 lbs. This weight requirement is an attempt by the recently organized Classic Moth Boat Association (12327 Man-ship Ln., Bowie, MD 20715) to make the older, heavier Moths more competitive against the new replicas made from the old design.

Replicas have proved to be lighter and faster than the original Moths, but skipper ability still has a whole lot to do with winning or not. Quoting Walt Collins of Virginia Beach, VA, "Moth racing has never been fair, but it has always been fun". Walt tied for 1st place with Randall Swan, both sailing Dorr Willey type replicas, one built by Collins, and the other by Ted Causey. Second place was also won by a replica Moth built and raced by Erky Gregory. This Dorr Willey design is available from the Museum of the Albemarle.

The Regatta was held on the Pasquotank River and raced over a triangular course. The breeze was stiff and two boats capsized even before the starting gun. Luckily though, the wind tapered off a bit so the race was on, and the two eventual winners established their leads early. Many champions of bygone years were on hand, both to race and to observe. Chuck Higgins, 71, sailed the last boat Dorr Willey built, "Miss Inez". These boats set a standard in Moth competition early on and are still competitive. Russel Post, 74, was also on hand to witness an early design of his do well in the racing. He vowed to return next year with a boat of his own.

The Moth Class is a developmental one wherein builders and designers are encouraged to come up with their own ideas and materials to build faster boats. Originally called the 11' Class, the International Moth is still raced throughout the world.

Scott Wolff, 3385 Kings Neck Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452

From the top: Movin' right along in the tiny Moth. The fleet gets off the start. Three contenders, from left; Walt Collins, Scott Wolff and Randall Swan.





From the top: More action, including a pre-start capsize in the brisk wind. Chuck Higgins getting the most from "Miss Inez". Winners Walt Collins (left) and Randall Swan (right) with the special award designed and built by Pete Overman (center). Scott Wolff Photo.

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"Tryall" is a 35' steam powered cabin launch I built and launched in 1989. Her engine is a two-cylinder open column 15hp steam engine with an oil fired boiler. This summer I decided it was time to attend the 1991 International Steamboat Flotilla at Oswego, New York in "Tryall". I had developed a passion for steamboat cruising ever since our 1982 cruise on the Rideau Canal from Kingston to Ottawa in Ontario in my previous, and first-built, steamboat, "Lisa Ann". I have steamed in "Lisa Ann" also on the Trent Severn Canal, up the Peterborough, Ontario hydraulic lift lock and through the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River. For some time I had wanted to steam on some U.S. canals.

I wanted to go the whole way to Oswego by steamboat: Up the Hudson River and out the Erie Canal to the Three Rivers Junction, then down the Oswego Canal to Lake Ontario. But I keep "Tryall" on the Taunton River in southeastern Massachusetts just off Narragansett Bay, and I had some sleepless nights contemplating steaming her down Long Island Sound. Nathaniel Greene Herreshoff most likely brought "Lightning" (1876, 57'x6') or "Kelpie" (1878, 47'x6'10") or "Kittatinny" (1878, the "Giant Bathtub", 60'x6') out on the Sound, but his courage was more than mine. "Tryall" is 35'x6' on the waterline and not a rough water boat. So instead I spent three weeks building a 38' trailer to haul her to the Hudson River.

I hired a hauler to tow "Tryall" on her trailer to Tarrytown Marine at the Tappan Zee Bridge on the Hudson, and come for her wherever my two week vacation ended. On Friday, June 14th, I had "Tryall" hauled at Somerset, Massachusetts and set on her new trailer. Frank, the hauler, met me at 5:30 a.m. Saturday morning and I gave him instructions on where to take her, and made arrangements for her to be unloaded there and in the Hudson River when we got there.

My number one, and only, crew member, my 26 year old

## Journey of the "Tryall"

daughter Lisa, could not leave with me until late Saturday afternoon. Lisa has been steaming with me on and off for the last ten years. No one could ask for better crew, Lisa has sea legs, can pilot as good as anyone and is at her best house-keeping for us. She tends the fenders and has a good eye to keep us from marking up the hull in the locks. She had already been through over 50 locks and would add 40 more on this trip.

Late Saturday afternoon my wife drove us to Boston to catch the Greyhound bus to White Plains, New York. From White Plains we took a cab to Tarrytown Marine, and at midnight found "Tryall" at the dock there. Lisa had ridden in a 26 mile bicycle race that day and I had met Frank way back at 5:30 a.m., so after that six hour Greyhound ride, we both had no trouble dropping off to sleep.

The incoming tide on the Hudson, with its 3-4 knot current, was not until 9 a.m. next morning, so we had time for a leisurely breakfast. At 9 we headed off up the river, June 16th, Lisa's 26th birthday, on a new journey for both of us. About an hour out the oil burner began going on and off from fuel starvation. With plenty of reserve steam in the boiler, we went into Peekskill Bay where I cleaned the filter. I had bought two spare filters for the trip but had forgotten to put them on board in all the excitement of our departure. In an hour we were underway again.

We ran into a solid 20 minute downpour and could not see much in front of us. This presented a good opportunity for me to show Lisa the advantages of radar, my little 16 mile range Furuno lit up and everything was right there on the screen. The rain didn't last long enough for us to really navigate and locate navigation aids with the radar, but we did play

with it some after the rain stopped.

We passed West Point, really beautiful from the river, and went on past Beacon and Newburgh. As the hours passed by, the beautiful river was always ahead. I planned to tie up for our first night at the Hudson Maritime Museum on Rondout Creek in Kingston, 65 miles upriver, and even with the time lost at Peekskill, we made good time and arrived there at 4:45, picking up the Creek on our radar as we approached the cans marking its entrance, just like on the chart. With this first day under our belts, the tension eased for me and I began to relax and enjoy my time with Lisa and "Tryall" and the serenity of this river. For the first time in years of steaming together, Lisa and I went out to a nice air conditioned restaurant for dinner. Afterwards, back at the dock, we washed "Tryall" down, there was a lot of road dirt on her from her trip to Tarrytown.

In the morning we went downriver for diesel fuel, not really needing it, but I feel more comfortable with a full fuel tank. Here, to our surprise, we met the crew of "Patience" a 32' trawler tug from Bristol, Rhode Island. They recognized "Tryall" from Narragansett Bay. We learned over coffee that our destination was the same, Oswego, but from there "Patience" would head to Kingston, Ontario and down the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Champlain Canal, then back down the Hudson and home to Narragansett Bay by way of Long Island Sound. Boy, would I like to take "Tryall" on such a trip! But for now it appeared we would have company on our trip. "Patience" cruised at about the same speed as "Tryall" and we cruised and over-nighted together much of the way to Oswego.

We departed Kingston at 8:30 a.m. Monday. "Patience" had left earlier but we stayed in touch over the radio. I had set my tide clock at Tarrytown, but now 65 miles upriver, we were at least six hours behind the tide and it was till going out. That whole day we fought the current, and ten hours later, at 6:30 p.m., we locked through



Lock #1 at Troy with "Patience", having caught up to her again.

The upper Hudson continued to be a beautiful river, and we tied up for the night at Waterford by Lock #2. In the morning we would start our climb up through the six locks at Waterford to climb 169' further from the 14' already climbed in Lock #1, leaving Waterford 183' above the Hudson. The locks would open at 9.a.m, they close nightly at 7 p.m.

I was up early Tuesday morning and walked up to Lock #2 to look it over. All the locks have four ladders, two on each end; most have ropes hanging about every 30' or so; and some have recessed pipes running from top to bottom, around which you can loop your lines. These are hard to see when entering the lock. To use the hanging ropes, you have to grab one on the way by at the stern with a boathook and then grab the next at the bow as you come up to it. Lisa and I decided to hang back if not too many boats were locking through.

As it turned out, no more than five boats were to lock through together anywhere on the whole trip, most of the time three. So, hanging back, we put fenders on the port side and went for the first ladder just inside the lock, holding the boat through a window at midpoint with the boathook and a line. This worked out well and we got pretty good at doing it this way. A few times early on we bumped the wall, but soon learned just where to place our fenders.

By 9:30 the green light was on to enter Lock #2. We pushed off the wall and let the other boats go in ahead of us. We entered slowly so as not to pull our wake in behind us and hooked onto the ladder. The big doors closed behind us, and the water started turning up around us like a bathtub being filled from the drain up. We went up 33.6' here and the exit doors then opened and each boat in turn left the lock. In the next six miles we would repeat this five more times and end up 183' above the Hudson, and from here on we'd be, for the most part, on the Mohawk River.

With the Waterford locks behind us, we cruised on about 50 miles through Vischer Ferry, Schenectady, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Fonda, where we stopped at 6:30 p.m. at the Poplar Inn, a nice stop with good facilities and restaurant. Here we enjoyed an evening dining and visiting with the folks from "Patience".

Right from the top: "Patience" sporting "fenders" for all the locking through. Approaching a lock on the Mohawk River.









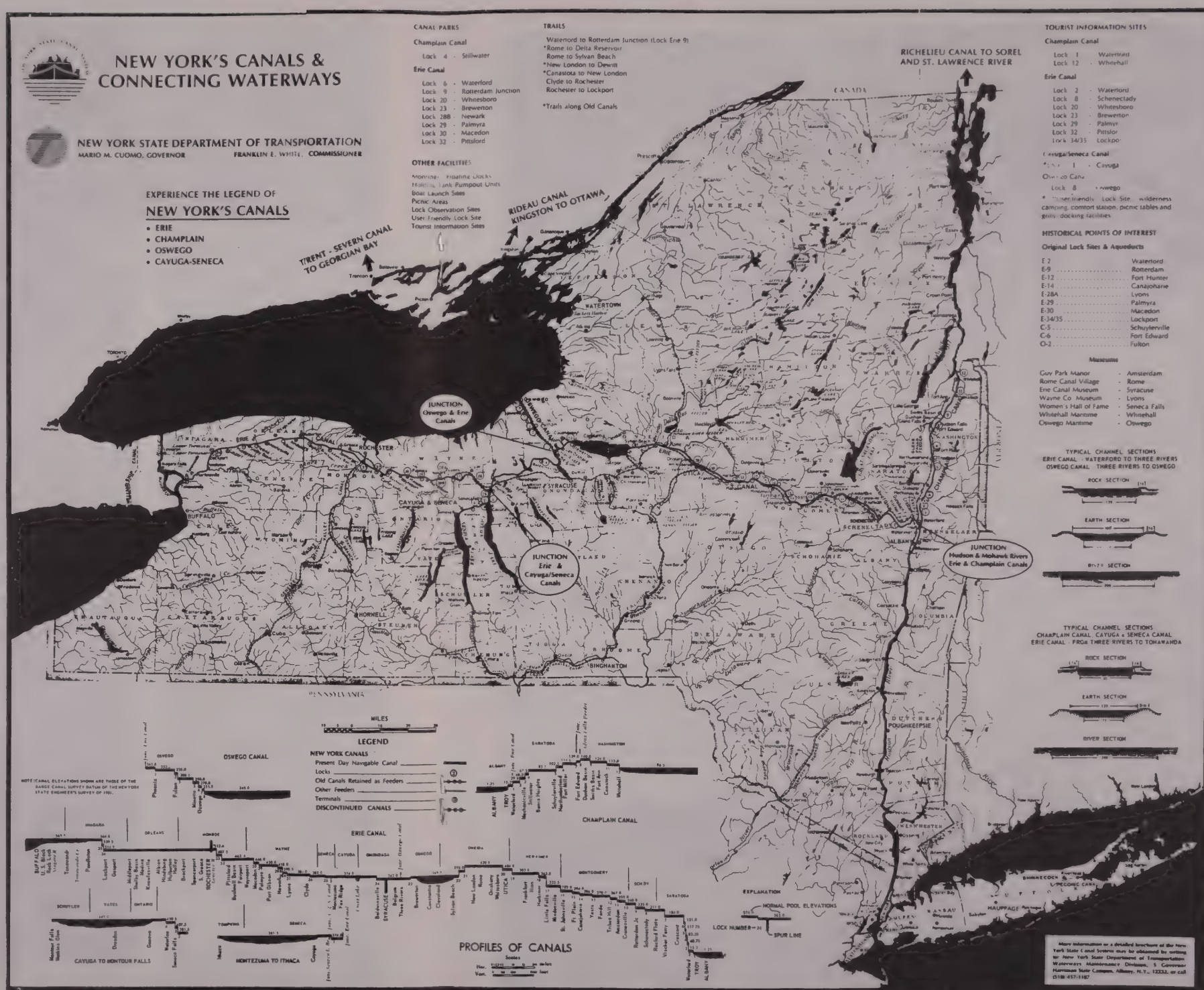
On Wednesday, after a good breakfast, we departed about 8:45 for Ilion, a 40 mile trip through Locks #13-#18, and up another 115', including going through Lock #17 at Little Falls, the highest lift lock on the canal at 40.5'. With 16 locks behind us by then we took this in stride. Around midday we again had fuel filter trouble and dropped anchor to clean it out by back blowing with air and repriming the burner pump. "Patience" stood by during this session. This was the last we had of this trouble.

We arrived at Ilion by 3 p.m. and had some time to sit around in the shade and relax. The "marina" here is just a long wall with a fuel pump and a campground set up for motor homes. None of the campground facilities were available to us, however. We had acquired left-over food from our restaurant visits so we dug out the camp stove and heated these up for supper.

We slept late the next morning and after getting a ride into Ilion with a man we met to get some bottled water, we left about 1 p.m. for Sylvan Beach on the eastern end of Lake Oneida, a 35 mile trip through four more locks, up two and then down two. At the midpoint between these we would be at our highest point of 420' above the Hudson, and after an 18 mile cruise we'd begin dropping down, 50' to Lake Oneida, and 175' in all to Oswego on Lake Ontario. We locked through Lock #22 at 6:10 p.m., probably the last boat of the day, and tied up with "Patience" at Sylvan Beach Marina. Here five different restaurants will come pick you up, and I left it to Lisa to choose. Her love of chicken wings won out and she brought enough back for our lunch the next day.

Lake Oneida is a long shallow lake about 25 miles to Lock #23 from Sylvan Beach. It averages 30' to 40' deep and runs east to west. A good west wind can blow up some rough water, so we planned on crossing first thing in the morning. At 6:00 a.m. we were up and, after breakfast on "Patience", we were off. The water was choppy already but no whitecaps yet. I was looking for the cans, but finally told Lisa to just follow the fishing boats, they seem to all congregate along the channel. By 9:30 a.m. we were locking through Lock #23 on our way down some 125' to Lake Ontario by way of the Oneida and Oswego Rivers. The nine miles through Three River Junction to Lock #1 on the Oswego River were along a "no wake" area with a lot of waterfront homes, so it was slow, but once on the Oswego River we could again travel at 10 mph.

At 11:25 a.m. we locked through Lock #1 on the Oswego River and were now 300 miles from the Tappan Zee Bridge. From here to Lock #8 is only 21 miles, there







The steamboat flotilla assembling in a lock on the Oswego River at Fulton, NY.

There was no lock at #4, and the deepest drop was at Lock #3, 27'. The Oswego River also has some nice waterfront homes and is scenic with picturesque views. Through Fulton's Locks #2 and #3 and on to Minetto, we arrived at Lock #8 and the entrance to Lake Ontario, where Oswego Harbor is protected from wind whipped waves coming off the big lake by a large stone breakwater.

We continued out around the breakwater to port past two large piers to the Wright's Landing Marina, owned and operated by the city of Oswego. This well maintained marina has the best launch ramps I have ever seen, six ramps, each with 100' of dock, and controlled parking for trucks and trailers. It was Friday afternoon, we had arrived early. The International Steamboat Flotilla would not start until Tuesday. "Patience" left us here on her continuing voyage. We would return here on Thursday to have "Tryall" hauled for her overland trip home. In the meantime we had three days to relax and enjoy Oswego, and we did just that.

By Sunday afternoon four steamboats had arrived, among them my friends Elroy and his wife from Manchester, New Hampshire. After six days of steaming in "Tryall" and not knowing when my fuel filter would foul again, Lisa and I accepted Elroy's invitation to steam with them on the flotilla starting Tuesday. This would back track our trip and steam the Oswego River back to Three River Junction, up and down the 21 miles and 7 locks. This time, though, a flotilla of 21 steamboats would take three days to do the 42 miles.

We spent Monday at the marina watching the arrival of the steamboats by trailer, and helping them

get into the water. They came from all over the U.S. and Canada. It was a good day for socializing and making new friends, as well as renewing acquaintance with old friends we see only once or twice a year at such events. The next day we would all steam upstream from Oswego to Fulton; overnight at Fulton; steam the next day to Three River Junction and then back to Fulton for the second overnight; and then conclude the trip the third day back at Oswego.

A flotilla of 21 steamboats, even after ten years of steaming amongst them, is still quite a sight to see for me. Not one boat the same, each the creation of the individual steamboater representing his own ideas, tastes and talents. Most have wood fired boilers, a few propane, some vaporized oil, and two, oil burners like "Tryall". All 21 steaming up, testing whistles, and preparing for a day of steaming, is a great sight to see and I was thankful to be part of it again for another year. Hardest of all, perhaps, is to describe 21 steamboats all in a lock together, fendered three or four abreast. And

when they all would join in a long group whistle down in that lock, what a sound..

Lisa and I steamed with Elroy on Tuesday and Wednesday, but returned ourselves to Oswego on Thursday, when I had arranged to meet Frank to have "Tryall" hauled for her return trip to Somerset. We enjoyed a last cruise in Oswego Harbor Thursday morning before meeting Frank and seeing "Tryall" off on her overland journey home. Then we rejoined the returning steamboaters later that day and helped with all the hauling and loading. That evening we enjoyed the flotilla banquet where plans were made for next year's event. It was goodbye then to all our friends, and vacation was over for us, with another great steamboat adventure now in our memories.

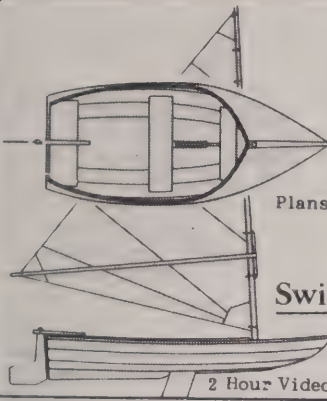
Roland Evans, W. Bridgewater, MA.


Roland Evans built "Tryall", his second steamboat, of aluminum in his backyard, along with its boiler and steam engine, all from scratch. "Tryall" is from the 1901 book, "Adventures Down the Bay" serialized in "Boats" several years ago.

"Tryall" heading home, vacation over.







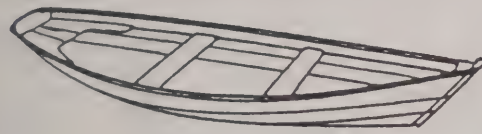
  
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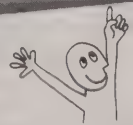


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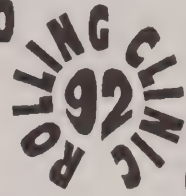
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The eleventh annual Southern New England Maritime History Symposium was held at Mystic Seaport Museum on Saturday, November 2, 1991. Topics covered by the speakers included shipbuilding in nearby Westerly, RI; the development of the seven-masted schooner *Thomas W. Lawson*; the story of the sloop *Providence* in the Revolutionary War; the schooner trade between the Bay of Fundy and New England; and the history of lighthouses in southern New England. As usual there was time between papers and after the buffet lunch for the participants to take in an exhibit or two at Mystic Seaport and to view the museum's boats on their winter moorings or the dinghies sailing on the river.

Of most general interest was the slide presentation and commentary of Sarah Gleason on the lighthouses of southern New England, based upon her recently published book, *Kindly Lights*. After introductory comments about the history of lights and the two major problems associated with them, differentiating one light from another and providing sufficient illumination, Gleason told the stories of several New England lights and their keepers. In addition to anecdotes running the gamut from the heroic to the comic, Gleason had something to say about the sociology, psychology, and politics of lighthouse keeping. Most interesting was her discussion of the role of Stephen Plesonton, Superintendent of Lighthouses (1820-1852), the evil genius of her book, in retarding the improvement of lights, and the efforts of David Melville to bring about reform based upon experiments he had conducted with gas illumination at Beavertail Light in Rhode Island. Reform came after 1850 with the adoption of true Fresnel lenses and the replacement of whale oil with manufactured gas even in New Bedford itself.

For Revolutionary War buffs Edward J. Cox touched upon many matters related to the sloop *Providence*, an early command of John Paul Jones, a vessel of 64' on deck, credited with sinking or capturing some forty enemy ships during the war. His informed and humorous stories included anecdotes about smuggling in Rhode Island, the burning of the British vessel *Gaspée*, the creation of a "Rhode Island navy," and several episodes in the career of the *Providence*,

# Eleventh Annual Symposium

the most extraordinary of which was the landing of 28 marines and the capture of two forts and many vessels in Nassau, a bloodless and seemingly comic engagement, as Cox related it, in which the marines claimed to have about ten times their strength and the support of an armada rather than a single ten-gun sloop off shore. Cox is the Director the Seaport 76 Foundation, which has built a full-scale reproduction of the *Providence*.

Dwight Brown, a retired engineer, editor of a recent book on the vessel *Charles Phelps*, and Vice President of the Westerly Historical Society, told the neglected story of shipbuilding on the Pawcatuck River, the narrow and shallow tidal stream of water that separates Connecticut from Rhode Island. He traced boatbuilding on the river from 1681, when the first was sent down the ways, through the Revolutionary war era and the 1790s, which saw a flurry of activity with some 30 boats from 20' to 115' built, to the nineteenth century, which produced ships for whaling, and hauling granite and guano. The two principal yards were the Greenman in Rhode Island and the Sheffield in Connecticut. His narrative was enlivened by stories of the dour-looking Victorian sea captains, who more often than not were good-humored, and yarns about local seamen. As Brown pointed out, the ships built on the Pawcatuck did not "set sail" down the river as the commemorative marker claims; they were poled or towed down, usually without rigs or rudders. A look at a chart explains why, indicating a great deal of shoal water on the river and in Little Narraganset Bay. One vessel, in fact, took four weeks to get herself launched!

Harold Lister, founder of the Parrisboro Shore Historical Society, and specialist in merchant sailing vessels of eastern Canada, described the coasting schooner trade be-

# SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND MARITIME HISTORY

tween the Bay of Fundy and New England in the 1920s and 30s. There were relatively few Canadian vessels in the trade between the United States and Canada, but they continued to be manned locally, unlike their American counterparts. The trade between the Bay of Fundy and Boston or New York usually carried lumber, spruce piling, lathes, and gypsum south and returned with cargoes of coal and fertilizer. To carry on this trade, sturdy, burdensome, three-masted schooners were employed, often with bow ports. Because the 50' tides of Fundy ebb a mile or so, the schooners were designed to take the ground. The trade was carried on only from March to December, the crew working in the lumber business in the off season. According to Lister, about eight round trips to New York would be a typical year's work. For all practical purposes, Lister suggested, the trade came to an end in 1948 with the death of Captain John Taylor of the *T.K. Bentley*. As it happened, a salt in the audience, who had crewed on the *Bentley*, provided additional information, including the fact that the ship had to be tugged into the Bay of Fundy within quarter an hour of high tide.

The most scholarly and technical of the papers was Erik A. R. Ronnberg's discussion of the design, construction, and career of the only seven-masted schooner ever built, the *Thomas W. Lawson*. Ronnberg, editor of the *Maritime Research Journal* and well-known maritime historian and model ship builder, convincingly demolished a number of myths about the *Lawson*, particularly the view that she was hastily designed by a firm without the appropriate experience. On the contrary, Ronnberg pointed out, plans for the *Lawson* evolved in five sets of drawings, which began with a May, 1901 plan for a conventional, ornamented hull based on the traditional lines of wooden ships,



and ended with a functional, utilitarian design appropriate for construction in steel. These modifications resulted in a hull that was stiffer, drier, stronger, cleaner, and more spacious than designs appropriate for wood. Significant also is Ronnberg's conclusion, based on design modifications, that the Lawson was intended for the ocean-going trade and not for the coasting trade in which she was subsequently used. He suggested a number of reasons, legal, bureaucratic, and economic, why the Thomas W. Lawson was unable to partic-

ipate in the Pacific trade and why only coastal trading was available to her when she began her career in 1902. Ronnberg was able to identify the draftsman who drew the plans for the Lawson as Robert Coffin Simpson, a 1900 graduate of M.I.T., who later was to be in charge of submarine hull design for Electric Boat. Ronnberg's model of the Lawson was available for inspection, and several other of his models of fishing vessels remain on display at the Stillman Building at Mystic Seaport Museum.

The range and variety of

the talks given at these Maritime History Symposiums are enjoyable. They vary in tone and style from scholarly investigation to anecdotal entertainment, and the audience is a cordial, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable group, who tend to dress informally and meet one another casually. If one thing was missing this year, it was a talk by someone who had been personally involved with working boats or ships in New England forty or fifty years ago.

Report by Jim Lacey

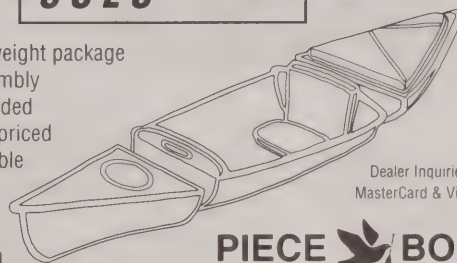


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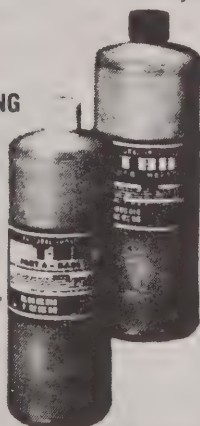
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Peter Spectre had this to say about the show in 1990 (WB #95):  
"The word on the waterfront was that this show was different, and it sure was...The exhibits were real boats, and parts for real boats, and services for real boat people, and the folks in attendance were real boat enthusiasts."



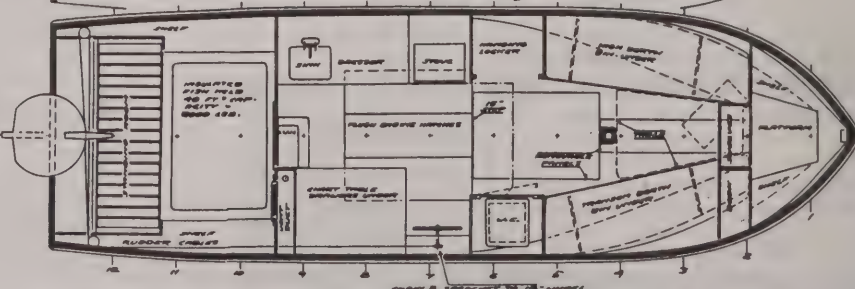
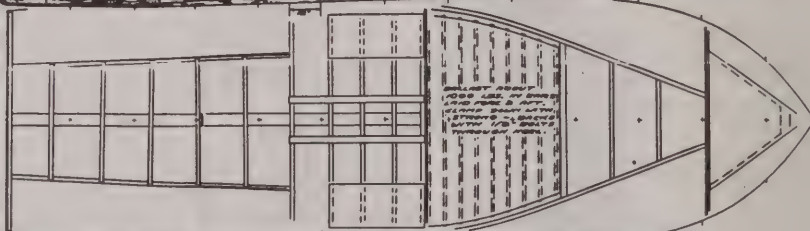
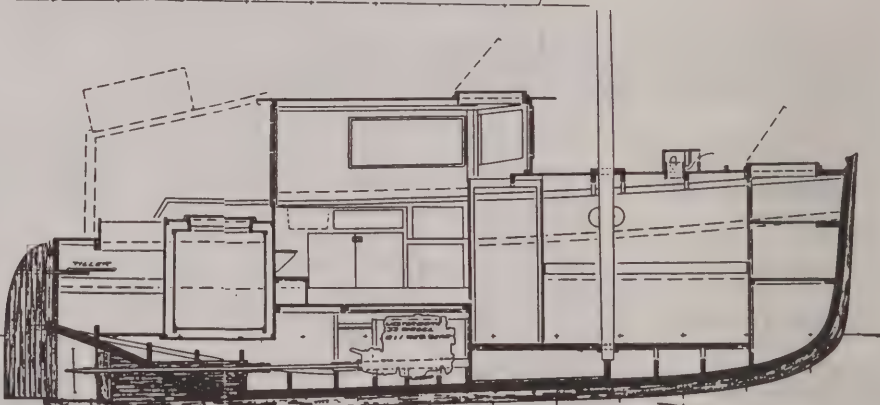
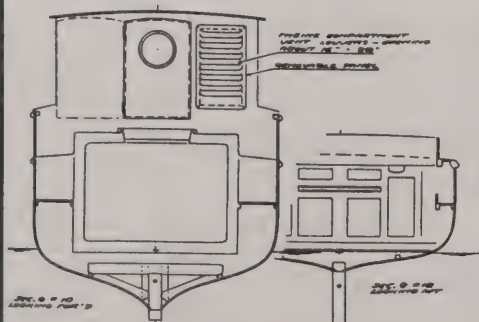
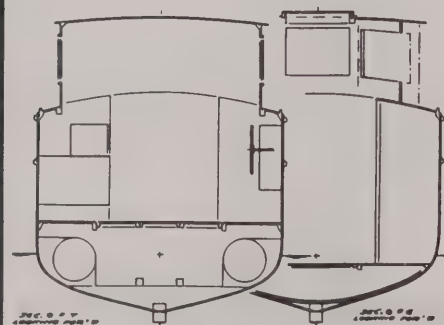
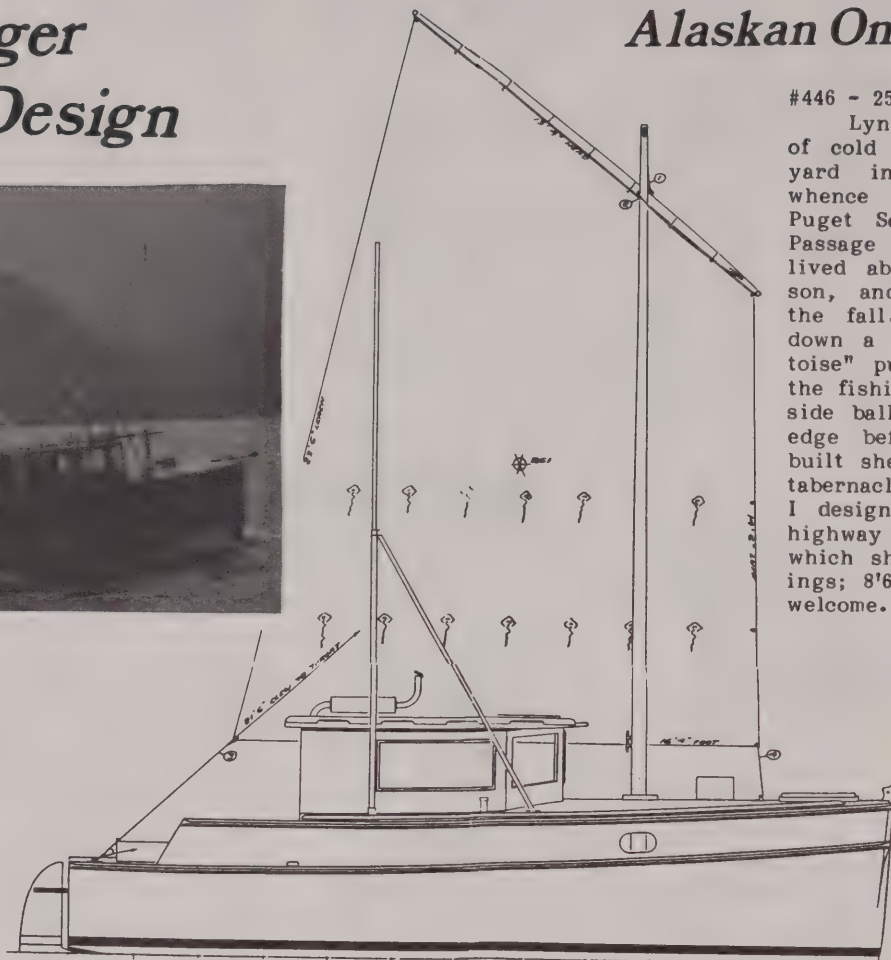
# Bolger on Design



## Alaskan One-Man Trawler

#446 - 25'6" x 7'9" x 2'3"

Lynn Fabian made a nice job of cold molding this boat in his yard in Great Falls, Montana, whence the boat was trailered to Puget Sound, run up the Inside Passage to Ketchikan, where he lived aboard for the fishing season, and returned to Montana in the fall. The fish hold can ice down a ton of catch. Her "Tortoise" punt forms an umbrella for the fishing well. Half a ton of inside ballast is left at the water's edge before a highway trip. As built she has a shorter mast in a tabernacle and no sail. At the time I designed her, I understood the highway maximum breadth to be 8', which she is, including the moldings; 8'6" allowed would have been welcome.





## Building My Baidarka

Building my baidarka in the traditional manner was a lot of fun, which was the whole point in my case. I really gained insight into the engineering genius of the Aleut in the process. I also acquired a great deal of respect for the work of Dr. Zimmerly, his book is a real treasure trove.

The dacron heat shrink experience was something else for me as I had no experience with it at all. Amazing stuff. Anyone working with it for the first time should make a frame about 18"x18", cover it with dacron leaving lots of big ugly wrinkles in it, and then hit it with a heat gun set on low. Miracles do happen.

The corners of the "mouth" on the baidarka and the area around the hatch were like that. Yet there is only one "dart" in the skin, starboard of the hatch. Had I really known what I was doing I could have avoided that. Wonderful stuff that dacron.

The boat has three coats of varnish with UV inhibitor. UV will still eat the dacron in time, but I wanted the translucent effect. You can see the plane of the waterline, great fun when you are in it. If you can stay in it!

The baidarka is tippy. It has all the reserve buoyancy of a bottle. It is fast, very fast. I am a beginner, but those accomplished paddlers who have tried it say "fast" in hushed tones. It is effortless to move, and keeping in mind this is an ocean going craft, it is quite maneuverable.

Keep in mind when building one of these that they are tailor made, make sure yours will fit you. Several people simply do not fit in mine, they are accomplished paddlers but they are too big. One of them cannot get his feet past the deck beam forward of the hatch opening. You have to be able to slide your knees past the forward edge of the hatch and your hips must fit when you are seated. Once you are in, it is very comfortable, but getting in can be something else.

My baidarka came in at 28 pounds, which is a bit lighter than Zimmerly calculates as the average. My frame weight equals that he took the lines from so the difference is in the dacron skin I suppose. The stringers are cedar; ribs are willow; keel, stem, stern are pine and fir; deck beams are pine and spruce; hatch is ash. Lashings are net twine; the thread for sew-

ing the skin is dacron sail thread. No glue, no metal. I used Benjamin Moore deck and porch enamel (red) to simulate the clay mixture used by the Aleuts to decorate their baidarkas. The most tedious part of building was applying the black and red decorative tufts on the forward deck.

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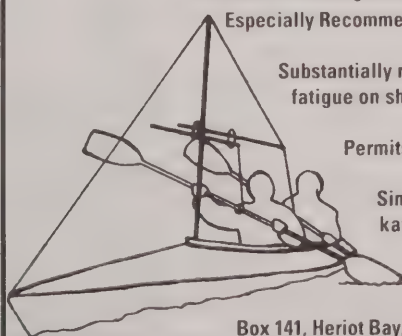
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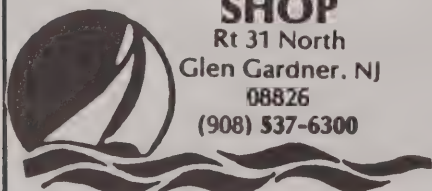
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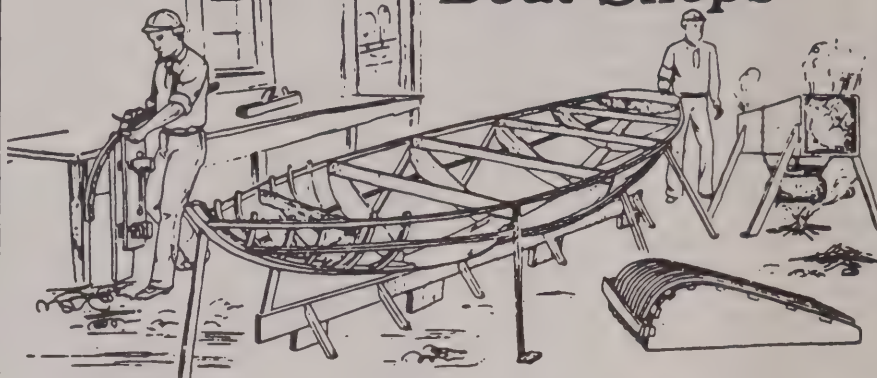
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## From the Boat Shops



## Boatbuilding Has Its Rewards



Mack McCarthy is no stranger to regular readers of "Boats", the Florida builder of strip canoes has frequently contributed his reports on enjoying his small boats on quiet backwaters along the east coast. This past summer Mac undertook a major adventure, a six-week trip north from Florida with its main focus upon the two-week course in strip-building the Wee Lassie double paddle canoe that he taught at Wooden Boat School. Enroute to this working vacation, Mac took in the annual Wooden Canoe Heritage Association Assembly in the Adirondacks. And he paddled in many places along the way, where he'd

stop, unload the 20 pound Wee Lassie off the roof of his truck, and try out some roadside paddling that looked interesting.

We visited Mac at Wooden Boat School midway through the two week course, while in the area for the Bean Sea Kayak Symposium. Mac had no less than nine students building Wee Lassies, and after a week some were already closing in on completion of the hull construction. Mac later reported that all nine took home canoe hulls sufficiently far along to allow completion by their builders at home without further instruction. Mac's pre-course nervousness about

Top photo: Three Wee Lassies in the Friday afternoon sun. Bottom photo: Inside the shop, planing some strips.





whether or not he could teach others how to build as he did had evaporated in the face of this success. Rich Hilsinger, the WBS director, was so pleased that he's scheduled Mac in for two sessions in 1992 to deal with the number of applicants who want to have a go at strip building a personal watercraft. And a winter course is planned for right in Mac's home town of Sarasota if enough applicants indicate an interest. Inquiries should go to the Wooden Boat School, P.O. Box 78, Brooklin, ME 04616.

Back home to the real world, Mac resumed building boats on order in his rented shop space and resumed his building construction jobwork for local contractors who wish to hire him away from his boatbuilding to finish off interiors of buildings. Then the local newspaper descended upon him as being something of a celebrity because of his teaching role way up north there in Maine where real boatbuilding came from. A well written and knowledgeably stated article, complete with full color photos of Mac at work and at play afloat appeared in the "Sarasota Herald Tribune", and Mac ended up with orders for four more boats as a result of this. That building contractor work is getting shoved further and further into the background for this 63 year old craftsman.

Mac loves to paddle as much as build and has located many places where he can get back close to natural conditions despite proliferating population growth and resultant encroachment of development in Florida. He gets out early mornings before the rest of the world intrudes, year round, and rows in his own sliding seat design as well as paddling his canoes. He remarked to the newspaper reporter, "The lighter the boat, the more it will get used." The quote went on to say, "When you can glide up close enough to an otter to hear the crunch of his jaws as he eats a crawfish, you know you have the right boat."

Mac seems to have the right boat from the builder's viewpoint as he always has some orders to fill. He prices his boats at around \$100 a foot so a 10' Wee Lassie in beautiful bright finish can be had for about \$1,000. Mac has to somehow find time to build new designs for his own amusement too. Late this past fall he reported that he had five boats going in the shop, "two for me, one a solo canoe of different design so I can start learning about free style paddling, the other a 13' canoe yawl. Just what I need!"

Mac McCarthy can be reached at Feather Canoes, 3080 N. Washington Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34234, (813) 953-7660.

Bob Hicks



From the top: Mac (center) helps a student carry his glued up hull outside for fairing with the power sander. All but two of the nine happy builders of Wee Lassies. It must have been fun.



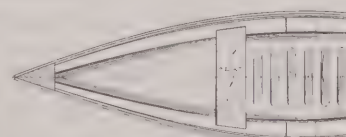
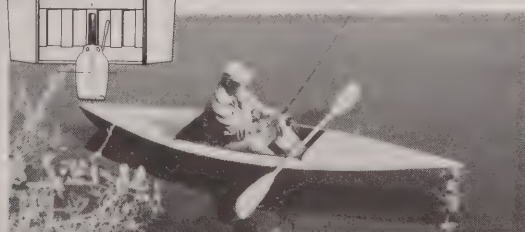
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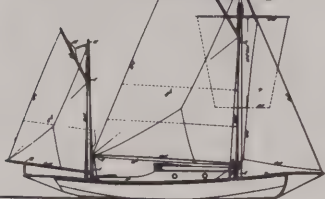
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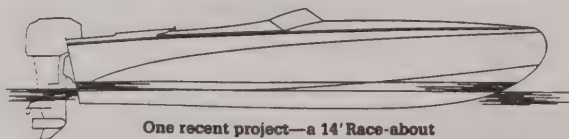
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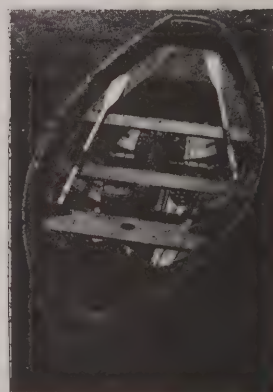
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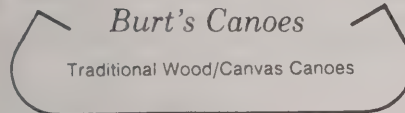


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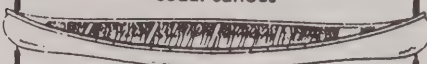
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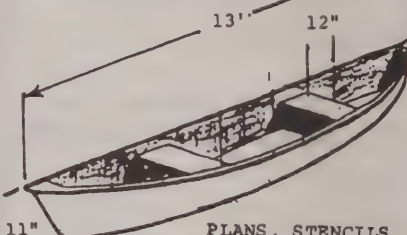
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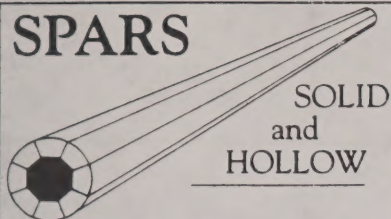
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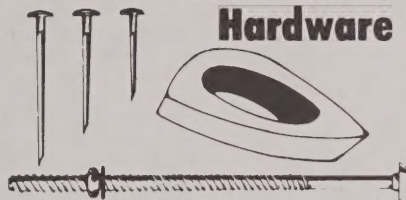
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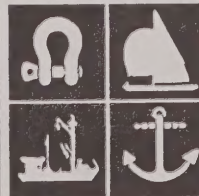
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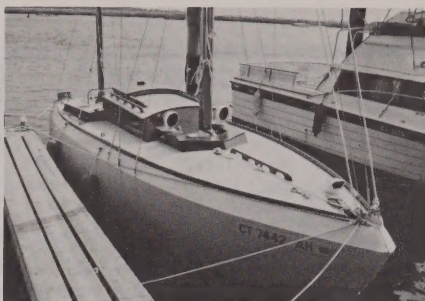
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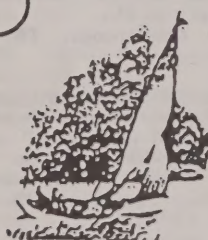
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